

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

MILLENNIAL STAR

ESTABLISHED IN 1840

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulders: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”—(ISAIAH 9: 6.)

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THE CHRIST GIFT

By ORSON F. WHITNEY

“GOD so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever should believe on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” That was the first and greatest of all Christmas gifts. Nothing can equal it in the whole range of human experience. It stands alone, unique, incomparable.

We are not to understand, from Paul's declaration, that the Son of God had no voice in this matter, that it was the Father's gift, and not the Son's. The Son no less than the Father was the Giver. “Here am I, send me.” Such was His voluntary offering. In reality it was God making a sacrifice of Himself, to lift up fallen man; for Christ was God before He died on Calvary, as much so as when He arose from the dead, glorified with the glory which He had before the world was. The Son is one with the Father; He is the second of three personages composing the Godhead, the third being the Holy Ghost. The Son was so called because He came forth from the Father to manifest “the fulness of the Godhead bodily.”

What makes the Christ gift so paramouly precious is the fact that it is synonymous with eternal life, the greatest gift God can bestow. Its universality is another factor in its greatness. It is a boon intended for all—not merely for one little tribe, class, or coterie, but for the entire human race. The absence of discrimination, likewise, enhances and ennoble the gift. There is no particular merit in loving only those who love us. Naturally we deem generous and big-hearted those who are kind and obliging to us and ours. But there is something beyond this—far beyond: namely, the big-heartedness of one who is kind and generous to everybody. Christ manifested that superior quality of kindness when He offered to die for men—not for one part of the human family, but for all. All were to be redeemed from the grave, and receive salvation upon the same terms.

Christ's gift of Himself as a ransom to redeem a dead universe was the acme of unselfish generosity. He had no need to die for His own sake. It was for man's behoof that His precious blood was spilt.

And He died not only for the good, but for good and bad alike. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." But Christ was more than man; and it took more than man to do what He did; He laid down His life for His enemies as well as for His friends. Hence, the supreme merit of His sacrifice. It was pure benevolence and philanthropy—an expression of the love of God for man. It had no personal motive, no family reason. It was disinterested, altruistic, magnanimous, Godlike.

Let us ponder upon it, this Christmastide, and see if we cannot find it in our hearts to feel generous, not only toward those who are generous to us, who give us gifts and show us courtesies; but also toward those whom we deem, or who deem themselves, our enemies, thus showing ourselves worthy disciples of the Author of the divine injunction: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you, and be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect, for He makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends His rain upon the just and upon the unjust."—(From the *Young Woman's Journal*, Vol. 27.)

WHAT THINK YE OF CHRIST?

By J. M. SJODAHL

OUR LORD, on one occasion, asked some learned Pharisees this question, "What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?"

This was a much debated question at the time of our Lord. Some expected the Messiah to come of the tribe of Levi, as did Moses, but these scholars promptly answered that He would be the son of David, and consequently, of the tribe of Judah.

That was a partially correct answer. But He was also to be the Son of God. Our Lord pointed out that David so regarded Him. That silenced those learned men. And they did not care to discuss the subject any further. They had made up their minds that the Messiah would be a descendant of David, a claimant to his throne, a worldly potentate, and no more. They were not interested in His spiritual mission.

The tendency at present, particularly among the classes that claim a "higher education," is similar. It is fashionable among them to regard Jesus as a teacher, a reformer, perhaps the leader of a socialistic movement, and no more. The question, "What think ye of Christ?" is therefore pertinent today too. What is our personal opinion of Him?

Isaiah, one of the great prophets of old, says: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9: 6.)

This is according to the translation in the version authorized by King James.

A recent translation by American biblical scholars renders the text thus: "For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; and the government will be upon his shoulder, and his name will be Wonderful Counsellor, Godlike Hero, Father Forever, Prince of Peace."

One of the main differences in these two versions is that in the latter the comma between "wonderful" and "counsellor" is left out, making the words one name, "Wonderful Counsellor," instead of two names. That, undoubtedly, is correct.

This "Child," born an heir to the throne of David, and to the kingdom that embraces both heaven and earth; this "Son," God's unspeakable gift to the world (2 Corinthians 9: 15), is Jesus, the Christ. That is, or ought to be, a complete answer to the question, "What think ye of Christ?"

"The government will be upon his shoulder"—the insignia of His government. He was born a Prince, born to rule, and it is more than likely, as tradition avers, that the manger, and His little body, were covered with clothes which, in colour and pattern, indicated His royal descent and world mission; for, did not the angel, on the night of the Nativity, make this announcement to the shepherds: "Unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger." (Luke 2: 11, 12.) The garments here mentioned as a "sign" must have indicated the rank and mission of the new born child, and thus the insignia of His government were, literally, upon His shoulder, from the beginning. A Jew at that time could not have mistaken the meaning of the colours that covered the Child Jesus and the manger, any more than a Briton in our day can mistake the symbolism of the Union Jack.

BUT we are interested, more particularly, in His names, or titles. The prophet mentions four: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

In order to understand all that the name, Wonderful Counsellor, implies, we must turn to the Pearl of Great Price, Moses 4: 1-3; and Abraham 3: 27, 28; also the Doctrine and Covenants, 29: 36-39. According to these scriptural passages, Lucifer, when the question of the redemption of mankind was before the council in heaven, asked to be given the mission of a saviour. He would save all, if the Eternal Father, in return, would give him the honour. Then the Beloved Son, who was chosen from the beginning, said, "Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine for ever." He had already signified his willingness to go, but He was equally willing to abide by the further decision of the Father: "Thy will be done." The Son, as a representative of the great Council, where this question was decided, was the "Wonderful Counsellor."

But have we any Bible proof for this interpretation?

Yes.

As early as the second or third century B.C., the Hebrew Scriptures were translated into Greek by competent scholars in Alexandria. Their version is known as the Septuagint, or that of

the seventy, because it is supposed to have been made by seventy learned men. That is the first Bible translation ever made, as far as is now known, and is older by perhaps twelve centuries than the Hebrew manuscripts used by the scholars who compiled the English Bible at the time of King James. In the form in which it is known to scholars now living, it is far from perfect. But it is still one of the main Bible standards. It was the Bible of our Lord and His first apostles, and it is frequently quoted in the New Testament as the word of God. In this version, the first name of the Divine Child, in Isaiah 9: 6, is, "Messenger of the great council, wonderful counsellor." That is to say, the seventy translators added the explanation that Jesus was called "Wonderful Counsellor," because He came as a messenger from that great Council. That, in the opinion of the seventy, is the great truth conveyed by Isaiah. On that authority, we assert that Jesus is not merely a teacher, a reformer, but the Executor of the plan of salvation, as agreed on in the heavenly council.

Incidentally, in this explanation of the seventy translators, we have irrefutable proof of the inspiration of the Pearl of Great Price.

"**M**IGHTY God," or, as the American translators quoted, understand it, "Godlike Hero," is the second name. The seventy render the same words, "Strong in Power." That is almost identical with the designation, "Mighty and strong, holding the scepter of power in his hand" (Doctrine and Covenants 85: 7), which means one endowed with Divine authority. Our Lord explains this Himself, when He says to His apostles: "All power is given me in heaven and in earth." (Matthew 28: 18.) That is the authority He holds, and which He exercises through His servants. He is, in the words of Paul, "Over all, God blessed for ever." (Romans 9: 5.)

Jesus is not only a man. He is God and Man. He is not to be compared with a Moses, a Socrates, a Luther, or any other prominent men in human affairs. He is the Son of God, Immanuel, the Captain of our salvation who is able to save, even to the uttermost, all that come unto God through Him, and to whom we owe our faith, our love and our obedience, and under whose banners the redeemed children of God are marching on to victory over sin and all evil, with songs of everlasting joy. "Hear Him!" was the commandment of the Father to the Prophet Joseph Smith, in the first great vision of this our great prophet.

The third name is "Everlasting Father," which the American scholars have rendered, "Father for Ever." The two versions are practically the same. But the seventy translate, "Father of the Future Age," which is correct; for Jesus was the "Father" or Originator of a new and everlasting age, a new era.

The appearance of Jesus on earth was the beginning of a new world. He was the one who taught that the road to greatness is humility and unselfishness. He sanctified childhood, by pointing out that citizenship in His kingdom was conditioned on a childlike disposition. He freed the slave, ennobled womanhood and broke down the walls of prejudice that separated God's children from each other. His influence is seen in every institution of philanthropy, in literature, in song, in music, in archi-

ecture. No name is more frequently uttered than that of Jesus. If it were possible to blot out from our civilization all that it has received from Him, there would be no civilization left; only the chaff, after the removal of the wheat, or the dregs in an otherwise empty cup. His work will continue, and this world will be redeemed from all evil.

The new age, which began with the first advent of Jesus, will reach its perfection in His second advent and actual reign over the entire earth.

Jesus, who, after His death, ascended to heaven, will return in person: "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him." (Acts 1: 11; Revelation 1: 7.)

He will return in glory, "His own glory, and in his Father's and of the holy angels." (Luke 9: 26.)

And here, let me quote the late President Charles W. Penrose (*Millennial Star*, Vol. 21, p. 581):

"He comes! The earth shakes, and the tall mountains tremble; the mighty deep rolls back to the north as in fear, and the rent skies glow like molten brass. He comes! the dead saints burst forth from their tombs, and those who are alive and remain are caught up with them to meet Him. The ungodly rush to hide themselves from His presence, and call upon the quivering rocks to cover them. He comes! with all the hosts of the righteous glorified. The breath of His lips strikes death to the wicked. His glory is a consuming fire. The proud and rebellious are as stubble; they are burned and left neither root nor branch! He sweeps the earth as with the besom of destruction. He deluges the earth with the fiery floods of His wrath, and the filthiness and abominations of the world are consumed. Satan and his dark hosts are taken and bound—the prince of the power of the air has lost his dominion, for He whose right it is to reign has come, and the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ."

JESUS is also the "Prince of Peace." Not merely a peace maker in the sense of an arbitrator, but one who rules and governs by peaceful means. The heavenly hosts, therefore, rejoiced at His advent, because they knew that it was the beginning of "peace on earth," so necessary for the completion of the plan of salvation. The Prophet Isaiah says there shall be no end of the increase of His government and peace. All other governments may fall and be scattered before the wind, as the image of Nebuchadnezzar, but His rule will remain and go on increasing. (Isaiah 9: 7.) It began with His first advent, and today, after almost two thousand years of blunders, the great nations of the world are frantically endeavouring to establish lasting peace. The influence of Jesus has prevailed in the world to that extent. And it will go on increasing.

The Prophet Isaiah reminds us that, as a necessary preliminary to the government of peace, the "yoke," the "staff" and the "rod" of the "oppressor" must be broken, as "in the day of Midian" (Isaiah 9: 4, 5), when "the Lord set every man's sword against the other." (Judges 9: 22.) The slavery of militarism must be removed, and even the "garments rolled in blood" must be consumed. But not before the condition among men has reached the stage described in Isaiah 9: 16-21, and chapter 10.

Then the Prince of Peace shall appear, as the Ruler. (Isaiah 11 : 1-4.)

Some object to the doctrine of a Millennium of peace on the ground that such a kingdom would be an aggregation of what Theodore Roosevelt called "molly-coddles." But nothing is further from the truth. The Government of the Prince of Peace will be a government of law and order, founded on justice. And that is exactly what the wicked do not want. They prefer a government founded on bayonets and cannon.

In the kingdom of the Prince of Peace, only the one that abides by His law will be safe. For, "with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." His government will be so organized that there can be no evasion of His law. He speaks, and it is done.

In the Doctrine and Covenants (45: 66, 67,) this truth, which many are apt to overlook, is more fully revealed: "And it shall be called the New Jerusalem, a land of peace, a city of refuge, a place of safety for the saints of the Most High God, and the glory of the Lord shall be there, and the terror of the Lord also shall be there, insomuch that the wicked will not come unto it, and it shall be called Zion."

Of times and seasons for the establishment of this kingdom of peace, law and order, we need not inquire. It will come as soon as man is prepared for it. But the affectionate farewell of our Lord to His people in the Revelation by John is: "I come quickly." And to this we reply with joy: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."—(The *Deseret News*, Church Section, December 31st, 1932.)

THE BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT

A STORY FOR THE CHILDREN

By ELEANOR B. THOMAS

IT was Christmas Eve, but it might as well have been any other eve as far as Catherine Martin was concerned. A bad cough that lingered after an attack of influenza had brought her south to the desert ranch of her mother's brother to convalesce. The dry, bracing desert air and sunshine were doing wonders for her, but tonight she was homesick. She longed for the happy times that the holidays brought to her Canadian home.

She stood gazing out over the sandy desert with its scrubby growth of greasewood and cacti and thought of the snowy hills and plains, frozen streams and lakes that meant jolly sleigh rides and hours of swift flying on gleaming skates.

Her Uncle Dan coming around the corner of the house was startled to see her burst into sobs and throw herself down on the steps in a huddled, grief-stricken heap.

"Why, honey, whatever is the matter?" he asked, putting his arm about the weeping girl and patting her in clumsy sympathy.

"O, it's Christmas, and I want to go home," came Catherine's muffled answer.

"You beginning to think we don't have any Christmas down here on the desert?" he asked.

Catherine nodded her head emphatically. "Can't see a sign of Christmas nor even find a smell of one. Back home everything smells Christmasy. Mother always makes pies and puddings and fixes dressing for the turkey with things that smell so good. Dad puts up the Christmas tree and the holly wreaths, and they smell good. Wilma and Ted are popping corn and making candy and oh," she wailed, "I just can't stand not even having as much as a smell of Christmas."

"Well," drawled her Uncle Dan, his eyes twinkling, "your Aunt Emma is a right good cook and I wouldn't be surprised if she couldn't stir some sort of dinner that would smell like Christmas if that is all you want Santa Claus to bring you."

"Now you're making fun of me," Catherine gulped, dabbing at her tears.

"Nary a bit of fun, honey, I know just how you feel."

Then he asked, "Been down to the bunk house lately?"

"Not since day before yesterday," Catherine answered.

"Something going on down there," her Uncle whispered.

"Got an idea the boys have been helping Santa fix things up a bit for Christmas. Wouldn't be a surprise to me to find something down there a wee bit more substantial than just a Christmas smell."

Catherine all excited was on her feet in a moment, "Oh, do let's go see what they're doing," and started on a run down the steps, but her Uncle grabbed her arm.

"Not so fast, young lady. You sit here and talk to me till they call us. We musn't spoil their plans."

As they sat talking the soft Arizona night deepened about them and one glorious star flung its light low in the sky. In the far distance twinkled the lights of a little town.

Suddenly from the bunk house came the sound of a radio. Somewhere a group of carolers were singing:

"O little town of Bethlehem
How still we see thee lie."

"Uncle Dan," Catherine murmured, "doesn't all this give you a picture of that little town of Bethlehem?" She made a gesture that included the star, the twinkling lights and the silent desert.

"You're right, honey, it does," replied her uncle, "and see yonder those moving shadows, they look like the shepherds leaving their flocks to follow the star to the manger in the Inn."

"I see them," said Catherine, "and over there come the three wise men bearing gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh."

"I think that the Babe of Bethlehem liked best the simple gifts that the shepherds brought," said her uncle. "For surely they would not go empty handed after hearing the message of the angel."

"Be not afraid," the angel told the shepherds, "for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people, for there is born to you this day a Saviour which is Christ the Lord. And this is a sign unto you: ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

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THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20, 1934

EDITORIAL

CHRISTIANITY AND FREEDOM

DECEMBER is the month of Christmas, a fact that is abundantly evident in many different forms even from the beginning of the month. And it is pleasing to observe that the spirit of Christmas is manifested more or less in proportion to the magnitude of the ocular evidences. So it appears that Britain is a country in which a religious feeling is perhaps more strongly felt at Christmas time than at any other.

Christmas is joyously celebrated as the birthday anniversary of the Saviour of the world. Even though many people do not believe in the divinity of Jesus and His saving power, they nevertheless celebrate the day and partake to some extent of its characteristic spirit—that of a love of man as expressed by the message, “peace on earth and goodwill to men.” But it is not to Christmas, its celebration and its spirit that we desire to direct special attention in this writing, important though these are. Yet we hope that the spirit of Christmas will be abundantly and widely felt this season. Our heartiest greetings are extended to all our readers.

It is to what has come to the world because the Saviour was born into it that we direct your attention. And what is this? All will agree it is Christianity, or the Gospel—the most beneficent power that has ever operated in the world. In the light of all the facts will not reasonable minds, on reflection, grant the truth of this statement? An adequate presentation of the case for Christianity would of course fill volumes. But we are not called upon to present the case—we believe our readers will accept our statement of its nature. And as they think of Christmas and its meaning and feel its spirit, we suggest they also give some thought to the related questions of Christianity, its spirit and achievements.

Our attention was recently called to this subject by some striking remarks made by Mr. Stanley Baldwin, former Prime Minister, and now a member of the British Cabinet. The Press quote Mr. Baldwin as saying, in a recent after-dinner speech, “Whatever you may say of the men who have been the leaders of Russia for the last 17 years, you will admit that they knew their job. They knew that when cutting out the old roots and starting afresh there was one root above all others that must be eradicated—that of Christianity and its ideal of religious liberty and freedom.” And the speaker went on to say further, that in Russia children were being brought up on lines worked out for them by theorists, and the essential corollary of that system was the absence of intellectual and religious freedom.

Now whether Mr. Baldwin was right or wrong in his statement

relative to Russia, we do believe that the facts support the statement that religious liberty and freedom have their roots in Christianity—in genuine Christianity. And if this is a fact—and it is—then herein lies a tremendous challenge to all thinking people. Does it not unerringly point to Christianity as having a divine origin? Perfect religious liberty does not characterize human systems. But everyone acquainted with genuine Christianity must admit that its ideals are liberty, freedom. In fact, the whole relationship of man to his Maker, God, is based upon his personal liberty. And this is freedom. In a world where genuine Christianity were universal there could be no slavery, no oppression, no forcing of the human will. Every person would be perfectly free to think as he pleased, to accept or reject any doctrine he pleased, and to act as he pleased so long as he did not in any way infringe upon the rights and freedom of others. Freedom under righteous laws would be his status. And the reason why there is not perfect freedom everywhere in the world today is because most men do not accept Christianity and live according to its standards and ideals.

The doctrine of freedom of the will was enunciated in the heavens before man came to this earth. It has characterized the plan of salvation from that time until this. It will continue to do. No one ever has been, or will be, forced to heaven or to hell. "Know this, that every soul is free to choose his life and what he'll be." The Gospel is the perfect plan of freedom. And the day will come when this plan will rule the world. Satan knows this and is using all his power in futile efforts to prevent the coming of this happy day. Let all saints pray that its coming may be speedy.—JOSEPH F. MERRILL.

A CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

NINETEEN hundred years ago, on the Judean hills, there were shepherds abiding, keeping watch over flocks by night. And it is recorded that an angel of the Lord came upon them and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and the angel of the Lord said, "Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy." Suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of heavenly hosts praising God and saying, "Peace on earth, good will to men."

There never was a time when this or a similar message was more needed than it is today. Everyone should court peace that this message might be before all men as would be one inscribed in gold, brilliantly illuminated, and placed in the canopy of heaven where all could see.

The Latter-day Saint message to the world is one of love and peace and happiness. May the Christmas holidays now so near be filled with joy to the elders, the Latter-day Saints, and their friends.

For us this Christmas will be our last in this wonderful land. We leave you soon, but we extend to one and all our heartiest greetings of love and good will. We sincerely trust that your holiday season will be one of gladness and plenty. We most

heartily wish you a merry, cheerful, happy Christmas and a bright and prosperous New Year.

JAMES H. DOUGLAS
RINTHA PRATT DOUGLAS

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

AS the glad season of Christmas approaches, we come to these favoured Isles from the other half of the English-speaking world to live and labour among you. Here in past generations our ancestors as Protestants and earlier as Catholics celebrated the Yule-tide, and our fathers as converts to the Restored Gospel, with even more appreciation, joyfully commemorated the birth of our Lord. We are thankful for the privilege of being in this part of the broad vineyard, and sincerely wish all the saints and friends and all humanity a Happy Christmas.

JOSEPH J. CANNON
RAMONA W. CANNON.

PRESIDENT CANNON ASSUMES MISSION LEADERSHIP

ON Tuesday, December 18th, the change in administration of the British Mission, made imminent by the recent appointment of President Joseph J. Cannon to succeed President James H. Douglas, was effected. President Douglas was officially released from his executive duties and President Cannon assumed the responsibility of directing the activities of the British Mission on that day.

President Cannon and family reached London on December 11th. President and Sister Douglas will leave England on December 29th.

In subsequent issues of the *Millennial Star* will be published a farewell message from President and Sister Douglas, and a sketch of President and Sister Cannon, introducing them and their three young sons to the readers of the *Millennial Star*.

JOSEPH SMITH

IN a tiny hamlet in New England's rock-bound Vermont, one hundred and twenty-nine years ago on the twenty-third of this month, Joseph Smith was born. His parents were humble, God-fearing folk, and in an atmosphere of wholesome reverence for God he grew to young manhood. Little wonder then, that, with increasing understanding, he found it difficult to reconcile with godliness the conflicting professions of belief of those about him who, each for himself and his own beliefs, claimed the approbation and approval of God.

He went to God for guidance, for explanation, for direction, and was granted a vision and an assurance. He became an instrument in the hands of God. Through him was precious

Truth restored. Upon him was bestowed the fulness of the Priesthood. By him was the re-establishment of the Church of Christ on earth effected. The message he was commissioned to bear was not new; he but declared anew the old and everlasting one.

The enemy of righteousness saw his ill-gotten dominion over the souls of men threatened by the ministry of this boy prophet. Men, in the wickedness of evil inspiration, were incited to oppose him. They slandered him and vilified him. They cursed him and did violence against him and his people. And finally, they killed him.

But the great work that he began did not end with his death. Rather it found new life and new benediction. And today in majesty it continues toward its glorious destiny and purpose, the salvation of the human race.

In this joyful season, as we express our gratitude to God for His great Gift of the Christ to us, let us keep in memory and in honour the prophet of these latter days whose heaven-appointed task it was to proclaim again to men, in the completeness of its pristine grace and power, the Great Plan in which the Christ-gift is the key.—RICHARD S. BENNETT.

IN THE LIGHT OF FAITH

IT was Christmas Eve. The day was done, and like a reclining recluse I sat alone in the old armchair, peering into the fading fuel of the fireplace. It was cold and dark and quiet. But there I remained, my legs crossed and my head propped by a supporting arm.

Like acensing fingers, pointing shadows surrounded me in that dim and melancholy eventide. Veiled by shades of darkness, the chairs and stools and table stood about me like motionless monsters. The hanging pictures on the walls seemed like smoked mirrors, each secretly portraying what movements I might make. The heavy curtains and darkened draperies enshrouded the atmosphere with more tranquility and gloom.

Silhouetted against the window at the west was the Christmas tree. Its profile bespoke loneliness and despair.

The silence was shaken by the sound of chimes. But the clanking seemed hollow and empty—like bells of straying cattle. I was in a darkened world.

Then in a flash the sullenness ended. Someone had pressed the switch. The hidden lights on the Christmas tree beamed forth in a galaxy of splendour. The Yuletide fir basked in the rays, sparkling in its tinsel, strands of silver and gold, tinfoil flowers, trinkets and trappings. Its brightness chased away those heavy shadows of suspicion and dreary clouds of gloom. In the illumination I saw that the Christmas tree was laden with gifts, each tidily wrapped and ready for opening.

The chimes were still ringing. Their notes were no longer a knell, but vibrated with the spirit of Christmas. They rang out joyous strains of "peace on earth, goodwill to men."

Then I thought. The story of the Babe in the manger, the Boy in the temple, the Nazarene teaching and feeding the

thousands, and the crucifixion of Christ was only a narrative to me without that thing—the light of faith.

With the rays of faith turned on the story of the life of Christ, one sees its far-reaching beauty; sees how our Lord has set gifts before us, waiting to be opened. They are the gifts wrapped with the promise of everlasting life and bound with the golden cords of His example. By our good works we can open them, and share them with others.

The light of faith will tell me that His supreme sacrifice on Calvary was for me; that His Sermon on the Mount was for me; that His lessons to the multitude were for me.

Just as the star in the east guided the wise men to the infant Jesus in Bethlehem, so does the light of faith guide us to Him today. With it we see the significance of the Christmas season; we grasp the spirit of the Yuletide.

Christ said: "He that walketh in darkness knoweth not whither he goeth." And then added: "While ye have light, believe in the light, that ye may be the children of light."

Thus can we "let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and glorify our Father which is in heaven."—WENDELL J. ASHTON.

THE BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT

(Concluded from page 807)

"How they must have loved the babe of Bethlehem," said Catherine, wistfully. "I wish I might have been there to bring Him a gift."

"It's not too late to do that," said her uncle. "Try making someone else happy, and that will be a gift He will be glad to accept. After He grew to manhood He told the people: 'Even as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto me.'"

Catherine stared at him. "Would that really be the same," she asked. Her uncle nodded. "I wonder what I could do right now that would make someone happy. Do you know, Uncle Dan?"

"Right now, honey," he answered, "the best thing I know of would be to see you happy and contented, doing all you can to get well and strong, so that in the spring you can go back home with roses blooming in your cheeks. That would be real happiness for all of us."

"I'll try," said Catherine, with a shaky smile, "and may this be a merry Christmas for every one."—(*The Children's Friend*, December, 1934.)

THE BEST CHRISTMAS GIFT that one can give to his branch at this holiday season is a contribution of means or suggestion, or both, to his branch building fund. Such a gift is a beneficence to many—not only to this generation, but to generations to come. Make your gift by participating in the M. I. A. building fund competition. Particulars of the contest were outlined in last week's *Star*. It ends December 31st.

PORTSMOUTH DISTRICT CONFERENCE

THE historic walls of the Royal Pavilion, at Brighton, rang with the challenge, "Know the Truth," at the sessions of the Portsmouth District conference, December 9th, where the message of the Restoration was preached with power to the assemblies of saints and friends. President Joseph F. Merrill and Sister Emily T. Merrill of the European Mission, President James H. Douglas and Sister Rintha Pratt Douglas of the British Mission, and Elder G. Homer Durham, Dr. Ray M. Russell, and Sister Catherine L. M. Horner, members of the Mission Y. M. and Y. W. M. I. A. boards, came from London to address the meetings.

In the forenoon the Priesthood membership met for discussion under the direction of President Douglas. The Relief Society sisters were led by Sister Douglas. Prior to the separate meetings there were joint preliminary exercises in which the district president made an oral report of district activities during the past season.

The M. I. A.-Primary conference-convention, held in the afternoon, was conducted by the mission M. I. A. board members. Assisted by local leaders and members, they staged a visual representation of the activities and programmes of the M. I. A. and Primary organizations that made clear and understandable the aim and purpose of the work of these auxiliaries.

Sister Emily T. Merrill was the first speaker in the evening session. She stressed the need of auxiliaries, and pointed out the fruits of such institutions. Her admonition was that we spare no effort in furthering the cause of auxiliary work in our branches. She said that the auxiliary programme of the Church was designed as an aid to the building of character.

Sister Douglas, in bidding the Portsmouth saints farewell, expressed her love for the British people, and told how difficult it will be for her to leave them. She acknowledged the help and support she has received from the saints in her executive work in Relief Society, offering her thanks and ap-

preciation to those who have rendered Relief Society service. The work of the Church, she stated in bearing her testimony, will go forward, and the Church will soon receive the favourable recognition in Britain that it is receiving elsewhere.

President Douglas related the story of the Prophet Joseph Smith and his divine calling. He compared the visions and persecutions of the Prophet with those of the Apostle Paul, pointing out how one, like the other, neither could nor desired to deny that which he had seen. Referring to the scriptures, he recounted the frequent visitations of angels in days of old, to show that the claims of Joseph Smith are not unreasonable, but in accordance with divine law. His closing remarks were a testimony of the truth of the Gospel, and an admonition to all to investigate its claims. The message is not one of foolishness but of earnestness, he said.

The method of the Church in preaching the Gospel is to appeal to the reason, not to the emotions, according to President Merrill, who was the concluding speaker at the evening session. Testimony comes to one from God, through revelation, he explained. The key to a testimony is prayerful, diligent obedience to the will of the Father. The time is coming, he stated, when the Church will be respected among churches in Britain, and he concluded his address by urging his listeners to examine, in prayerful sincerity, the message of Mormonism.

Musical numbers of the day's programme consisted of a piano solo by Sister Pearl Tomes, a vocal quartette composed of members from the Portsmouth branch, a vocal trio from the Brighton branch, and vocal solos by Sister Inez Cameron Russell and Mr. Arthur Miles.

District missionaries in attendance were President Richard G. Harston and Elders Parley P. Giles, O. Kenneth Taylor, and Walter J. Eldredge.

WALTER J. ELDREDGE
Clerk of Conference.

CHURCH WIDE NEWS

FROM BROTHER A. B. MCGOWAN of the Glasgow branch has come news of the death of Elder John Eccles Inglis, a former missionary to Scotland.

Elder Inglis was born in Scotland 83 years ago. He emigrated to Utah at an early age, but returned in 1921 to the land of his birth to fill a two-year mission. With Elder Thomas Finlayson who, a Scotsman like himself, and about his own age, had also returned to Scotland to do missionary work, Elder Inglis laboured in the Glasgow, Edinburgh and Airdrie branches. Always ready to teach and defend the Gospel, and unafraid to suffer for its cause, Elder Inglis made many friends among the Scotch people.

Seven years ago Brother Inglis,

with his wife, made what was to be his last trip to Scotland. Ardent and constant temple workers, the object of their coming was genealogical research, but they nevertheless found time to visit and renew acquaintances with old friends in the Scottish branches.

BAPTISMS in the Southern States Mission totalled 548 for the first nine months of this year, according to the report made by Elder George F. Richards, of the Council of Twelve, who last month completed a tour of the mission. During his visit, Elder Richards dedicated a newly completed chapel at Columbus, South Carolina. Throughout the mission there is great interest on the part of non-members in the affairs of the Church, he said.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD

Appointments—Elder Rex A. Skidmore was appointed on December 7th to serve as corresponding secretary of the British Mission.

Elder Erastus J. Milne was appointed on December 13th to preside over the Newcastle District.

Elder Alma H. Boyce was appointed on December 15th to preside over the Nottingham District.

Elder Walter J. Eldredge was appointed on December 15th to preside over the Norwich district.

Releases—Elder Farron E. Cutler, of the London, Welsh, and Nottingham districts, the latter over which he presided, was honourably released from active missionary duty on December 15th.

Elder Gaskell A. Romney, of the Sheffield, London and Newcastle districts, the latter over which he presided, was honourably released from active missionary duty on December 15th.

Elder John B. Stagg, who laboured as a travelling elder in the Leeds, Bristol and Norwich districts, served in the British Mission Office and as secretary to Patriarch James H. Wallis, and completed his missionary term as president of the Nor-

wich district, was honourably released on December 15th.

Transfers—Elder Alma H. Boyce was transferred from the Newcastle to the Nottingham district, Elder Claudius Stevenson from the Nottingham district to the Portsmouth district, and Elder Walter J. Eldredge from the Portsmouth to the Norwich district on December 4th.

Elder Elvon G. Jackson was transferred from the Scottish district to the Newcastle district, and Elder Reed Ellsworth from the Newcastle to the Scottish district on December 6th.

Elder Rex A. Skidmore was transferred from the London district to the British Mission Office, Elder Julian K. Lindsay from the Manchester district to the London district, and Elder Melvin Richards from the Nottingham district to the Manchester district on December 7th.

Doings in the Districts: Birmingham: Elder Mylan L. Healy was honoured at a farewell supper by the Relief Society sisters of the Wolverhampton branch on December 6th. A social evening fol-

lowed. Arrangements for the affair were under the direction of Sister Alice R. Moore, Relief Society president.

Bristol—Saints and friends of the Bristol branch were entertained on December 1st at a harvest ball, sponsored and arranged by the branch M.I.A. officers. The branch hall was gaily festooned for the occasion, and guests enjoyed games, a concert programme, refreshments, and dancing to the music of a radio-gramophone.

Fry's chocolate factory at Somerdale was the object of another of the educational visits of a group of saints and friends of the Bristol branch. Sister Gladys A. Millard arranged the trip, and it proved to be very interesting and instructive.

Manchester—On Saturday, December 8th, the Manchester branch Primary children staged a clever and entertaining concert in the branch chapel. They were directed by their leader, Sister M. Wiles. The purpose of the event was to raise funds for a children's Christmas party. Through the generosity of the large crowd in attendance, the evening's receipts totalled nearly three pounds.

"The Second Coming of the Saviour" was the theme of the Oldham branch conference on December 9th. Principal speakers of the evening session were President E. H. Startup, Brother R. J. Pearce, and Brother F. G. Wiles, district Sunday School supervisor. Musical numbers included a violin solo by Sister Jane Nelson. Brother Frank Lomas played her accompaniment on the accordian.

Stating that she realized that the Latter-day Saints' movement was an element for good in the community, and that she was glad to see that the women of the Church had equal standing with the men, the Mayoress of Hyde, Mrs. S. Babbage, opened the Hyde Relief Society Christmas sale of work, Saturday, December 1st. The Christmas sale of work is an annual affair in the branch, and is planned to provide funds for a Christmas treat to the worthy poor, both

members and non-members, within the branch.

Sister Florence Allsop, in behalf of the Relief Society, welcomed Mrs. Babbage. Elder Eargle C. Harmsen proposed a vote of thanks to the Mayoress for her services, and explained to the patrons of the event the work and function of the Relief Society.

During the evening a programme of variety entertainment was presented by members and friends. It was directed by Brother J. W. Calderwood.

Stalls were sponsored by the Relief Society, the Sunday School, the Genealogical Society, the Gleaner Girls, and the M Men. President Elbert H. Startup was M. C.

Norwich—The M. I. A. organizations of the Lowestoft branch sponsored a social evening on November 22nd in honour of President John B. Stagg. Games, musical numbers, dancing and refreshments made up the entertainment programme, which also included the presentation of a gift to President Stagg. Sister Hilda Cook was in charge of the arrangements of the affair.

Lowestoft's Primary Association presented a well-prepared concert programme on November 28th, the feature of which was a tableaux showing the activities and standards of Primary. Monologues and vocal numbers completed the entertainment. Sister May Coleby, Gladys Walpole and Annie Stafford directed the presentation.

The recreation room of the Lowestoft chapel took on the aspect of a bustling market, Thursday, December 6th, when the Relief Society of the branch, under the direction of Sister Ivy Upson, staged their annual Xmas Bazaar. All manner of goods were displayed on the counters of temporary stalls erected for the occasion, and the brisk buying that characterized the affair netted a substantial sum with which the Society will provide Christmas cheer for the less fortunate. An impromptu musical programme brought the day's activities to a pleasant conclusion.

Norwich branch saints honoured President John B. Stagg at a farewell social in the Norwich chapel

on Thursday, December 6th. During the evening he was presented with a gift in appreciation of his friendship and service to them. The entertainment programme, planned for the occasion, included concert numbers, games, as well as delicious refreshments.

Ellen Marshall, of Norwich, and Lilly Edna Mason, of Yarmouth, were baptised at a service in the Norwich chapel Saturday,

December 8th. District President John B. Stagg and Branch President Albert A. Cole administered the ordinances.

Personal—Allen Thompson was the name given to the infant son of Brother and Sister James A. Thompson of the Middlesbrough branch, on December 2nd. The blessing was pronounced by Elder Fred R. Glade.

A PRAYER AT CHRISTMAS

A MID the Christmas greetings, gifts and cheer
 May we remember Thee, Oh Christ our King,
 Whose birth we celebrate this holy day,
 Of whose great love the hosts of heaven sing.

If but Thy love could enter ev'ry heart,
 This world would be a heaven filled with peace,
 For God is love, and love is peace; and Thou,
 Oh King of Heav'n and earth, art Prince of Peace!

Oh may the Christ-like spirit fill our hearts
 With charity and peace and love sincere,
 And may it sink deep in our souls and stay
 Not just today, but all throughout the year.

—NORA H. BROWN.

DEATH

STANLEY—Robert James Stanley, 17, of Leicester, formerly an active member of the Manchester branch, died in the Leicester City Hospital

on November 3rd, after a lingering illness. A memorial service was held in his honour on November 11th, in the Manchester branch.

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